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SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS: June 04, 2007

Fischer: Conclude Eurofighter Case by Summer

1. Austrian President Heinz Fischer is urging that by summer, the entire complex matter surrounding the Eurofighter purchase for Austria's military, including the parliamentary investigative committee looking into the circumstances of the deal, be concluded. In an interview with an Austrian daily, Fischer, who is also commander-in-chief of the Austrian armed forces, emphasized that he would "very much prefer for the matter to yield concrete results by summer." Discussing the controversy over the Eurofighter purchase, Austrian President Heinz Fischer stressed in an interview with mass-circulation daily Kurier on June 3: "I swore in the cabinet, to support its members and work well with them. This is also entirely the case when it comes to the Defense Minister, who is certainly dealing with an extremely difficult task at the moment. I do not doubt his full commitment to the Austrian army and to the country, and I have complete faith in him." The dispute over the Eurofighter deal is "indeed, a complex and controversial issue, and I truly hope we will get some clear results in the entire matter by summer."

Interview with Ambassador McCaw

2. An Austrian tabloid published an interview in its weekend issue with US Ambassador to Austria Susan McCaw. The Ambassador talked about the Marshall Plan, its 60th anniversary on June 5, about what the Marshall Plan has accomplished and about her view of why it is significant for the United States: "For us, it was an investment in security and stability." Mass-circulation tabloid Kronen Zeitung on June 3 published an interview with US Ambassador to Austria Susan McCaw, who said she was "impressed about how many areas and aspects of the Austrian economy are the results of the European Recovery Program." Austria, the Ambassador underscored, "is the only country that still has funds from the Marshall Plan." When the Marshall plan was set up in 1947, "the United States primarily wanted to offer Europe a helping hand; also in order to keep it together. For us, it was an investment in our common stability and security. The [ERP] money was one of the foundation stones of the EU, and it is great to see the results." The Ambassador is not convinced some kind of "Marshall Plan for Africa, or for Iraq," would necessarily work: "The key word in post-WWII Europe was 'reconstruction.' The knowledge and expertise was still there, and things just needed to be fixed. In Africa, on the other hand, we are looking at construction, not reconstruction." Meanwhile, "Iraq needs to be given economic assistance. I was in northern Iraq in January with an Austrian business delegation, and I saw what economic support can accomplish. The entire region was quiet and stable, and all of Iraq could eventually become as stable." She believes that "Americans and

Europeans could invest more capital and expertise in both Iraq and Afghanistan. It is our responsibility." Today, Ambassador McCaw suggested, "Europeans and Americans should cooperate to try and support other, less fortunate countries." She argued that "if there's stability and hope in as many countries as possible, we will all benefit from more security in the long run."

60 Years: Marshall Plan Anniversary

13. A mass-circulation daily reported on the 60th anniversary of the Marshall Plan, the "biggest reconstruction project in history." Austria received about one billion US dollars from the American assistance program, which was set up to help rebuild Europe after WWII. According to mass-circulation daily Kurier, the Marshall plan's economic success was enormous: By the official end of the Marshall Plan program in 1953, the 16 ERP countries' economic performances were better than before WWII. The speech suggesting the launch of an assistance program for Europe held by Secretary of State George Marshall in 1947 was "short and to the point," and it was "a 12-minute speech that changed the world," the Kurier says. The European Recovery Program (ERP) was based on a "simple but enormously effective concept: The United States sent financial and economic assistance and goods to Europe, which in return deposited the equivalent of the assistance received in a counterpart account, with which new projects were financed." The ERP partners also needed to commit themselves to stabilizing their currencies and to balance their budgets. The Marshall Plan's success was unprecedented, and indirectly, it is effective in Austria to this day.

Austria Releases the Former Kazakh Envoy

14. Austrian police have released on bail Rakhat Aliyev, the former Kazakh envoy to Austria. Aliyev, the son-in-law of Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev, is wanted on kidnapping charges in his country. He must stay in Austria while the authorities consider Kazakhstan's extradition request. The controversial businessman is married to the eldest daughter of Kazakh President Nazarbayev, and was sacked as Kazakh Ambassador to Austria last week amid a family feud. In an interview with an Austrian magazine, Aliyev said his life would be in danger if he were sent back to Kazakhstan. ORF TV's prime time news Zeit im Bild I reported on Sunday.

Kissinger in Vienna

15. Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is visiting Vienna today. Although his trip is primarily a private visit, Kissinger is expected to meet with Austrian government representatives, including Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer and Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik, on Monday, according to ORF online news.

US Missile Defense: Putin Threatens Europe

16. Russian President Vladimir Putin's latest threats create the impression he may want to bring back the Cold War, Austrian media suggest. In the dispute over US plans for a missile defense shield based in some Eastern European countries, Putin warned that Russia would target missiles at central Europe, should the US go through with its plans. The strategy appears to be working: For the first time, Washington has signaled its willingness to compromise on missile defense, said ORF online news.

G-8 Summit to Address Climate Change

17. Ahead of a G-8 summit of industrialized nations in Germany, at which global warming is expected to be a major issue, China unveiled its first-ever plans to tackle the problem. Beijing, one of the world's biggest polluters, stressed it is not prepared to sacrifice

economic development in the process, however. German Chancellor Angela Merkel meanwhile said she believes the United States could be brought into the UN process to combat climate change at the summit. Merkel also condemned the violence that broke out on Saturday in the city of Rostock, which left more than 1,000 people injured, including over 400 police. Reporting on the up-coming G-8 summit, liberal daily Der Standard suggests that on the issue of climate change, the Europeans are adopting a tough stance towards the US. German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who is hosting the summit at Heiligendamm, does not want to agree to any "shabby compromises" with US President George Bush. At the G-8 meeting, Germany is expected to propose binding environmental protection measures aimed at limiting the rise in global temperatures until 2050 to two degrees Celsius.

Meanwhile in an interview with mass-circulation provincial daily Kleine Zeitung, California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's energy advisor, W. Michael Hanemann, suggested that regarding climate protection, the "Bush administration's view is different from that of other parts [of the US]." California "is confident that the problems can be solved, but across the US there's the concern that the fight against climate change will weaken the economy. This is an exaggerated and overly pessimistic view. The most important tool to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is technological progress."

US President Visits Europe

17. US President George Bush will visit the Czech Republic today, where the United States wants to build a radar base aimed at deflecting attacks from rogue states such as Iran. It is going to be a "tricky" European trip for President Bush, given Russia's opposition to the US defense plans, Austrian media suggest. The US President is going to Germany later this week to attend the G-8 summit there, said ORF radio early morning news Morgenjournal.

Democrat Hopefuls Clash over Iraq

18. The war in Iraq has divided Democratic presidential hopefuls during a debate televised across the United States. Exchanges among the eight candidates, including frontrunners Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and John Edwards, brought repeated calls for America to withdraw from Iraq. There were also clashes over whether President George W. Bush had made the US safer from terrorism since 9/11 ORF radio early morning news Morgenjournal reported.
McCaw